

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace the originally filed claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 7 (cancelled)

Claim 8 (new): A fluid distributor for a heat and material exchange column, comprising a series of adjacent parallel vertical walls defining alternate gas and liquid spaces, some of the vertical walls being separated by horizontal bottom walls provided with a line of holes and at least a portion of each vertical wall being provided with a line of openings, each pair of adjacent vertical walls defining a gas space, the line of openings being formed in the upper part of the vertical wall, the horizontal walls being fixed by their ends to a peripheral ring, characterized in that first openings have a first length toward the horizontal wall and second openings have a second length toward the horizontal wall, the second length being greater than the first.

Claim 9 (new): The distributor as claimed in claim 8, in which the first and second openings are elongate, the second openings being more elongate than other openings.

Claim 10 (new): The distributor as claimed in claim 9, in which the first and second openings have an oval or rectangular shape.

Claim 11 (new): The distributor as claimed in claim 8, in which the line of openings comprises one opening out of N openings which is a second opening, N being an integer higher than 1, and the other openings of the line are first openings arranged between the second openings.

Claim 12 (new): The distributor as claimed in claim 11, in which N is between 4 and 6 inclusive, and preferably equal to 5.

Claim 13 (new): The distributor as claimed in claim 8, in which the gas spaces are closed at the top.

Claim 14 (new): A heat and material exchange column, characterized in that it comprises at least one distributor as claimed in claim 8.